

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 GENEVA 04807

EXDIS
USSALTTWO E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PARM
SUBJECT: MINISTER SEMENOV'S STATEMENT OF MARCH 30, 1978
(SALT TWO-1671)

SEMENOV STATEMENT, MARCH 30, 1978

AT THE JANUARY 27, 1978 MEETING AS WELL AS PRIOR TO
THE WORKING RECESS THE USSR DELEGATION, PROVIDING EXTENSIVE
RATIONALE, SET FORTH THE SOVIET SIDE'S APPROACH TO THE
QUESTION OF REDUCING THE AGGREGATE NUMERICAL LEVEL OF THE
STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS BEING LIMITED, AND OF ESTABLISHING
AN OVERALL LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF LAUNCHERS OF ICBMS AND
SLBMS EQUIPPED WITH MIRVS.

TODAY THE USSR DELEGATION HAS THE FOLLOWING TO STATE
IN ADDITION.

- I

AS YOU KNOW, PURSUANT TO THE VLADIVOSTOK UNDERSTANDING
THE JOINT DRAFT TEXT RECORDS AN INITIAL LEVEL OF 2,400
FOR STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS.

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CLEARLY THE LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS TO
THE AGREED AGGREGATE LIMITS REPRESENTS ONE OF THE MOST
IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE TREATY BEING WORKED OUT, OPENING
THE WAY TO A NEW STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, TO MORE SWEEP-
ING UNDERSTANDINGS, WHICH WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO MOVE
AHEAD TOWARD HALTING THE STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS RACE AND

SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN SUCH ARMS.

THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS HELD CONFIRMS THAT THERE IS AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE BETWEEN THE SIDES TO REDUCE THE AGGREGATE LEVEL OF STRATEGIC DELIVERY VEHICLES ALREADY DURING THE TERM OF THE TREATY BEING WORKED OUT. AND SPECIFIC PROCEDURES PERTAINING TO THIS WOULD BE WORKED OUT IN THE STANDING CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION, ACCORDING TO ARTICLE XVII, SUBPAR. 2(E).

REDUCTION OF THE 2,400 AGGREGATE NUMERICAL LEVEL WOULD MEET THE OBJECTIVES OF ADOPTING EFFECTIVE AND MEANINGFUL LIMITATIONS ON THE STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS OF THE SIDES UNDER THE NEW TREATY, AND THE TASK OF REDUCING THE THREAT OF OUTBREAK OF NUCLEAR WAR.

OF COURSE, SUCH REDUCTION MUST BE CARRIED OUT IN STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY AND EQUAL SECURITY, AND PRECLUDE UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE IN ANY FORM WHATSOEVER. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT IS NECESSARY TO TAKE ADEQUATE ACCOUNT OF THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF BOTH SIDES AND THE OBJECTIVE OF NOT UPSETTING THE BALANCE OF INTERESTS IN THE LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, AS THAT BALANCE EMERGES AT PRESENT AND DURING THE TERM OF THE TREATY BEING WORKED OUT.

THE SOVIET SIDE'S PROPOSALS CONCERNING REDUCTION OF
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THE NUMBERS OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS ARE BASED ON PRECISELY SUCH CONSIDERATIONS OF PRINCIPLE.

THE EXTENT OF REDUCTION OF THE AGGREGATE LEVEL OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS BY 150, PROPOSED BY THE SOVIET SIDE, IS A MAJOR STEP IN THE LIMITATION AND REDUCTION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, AND THIS IS ATTESTED TO BY THE ACTUAL SITUATION IN THE AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION. THIS PROPOSAL IS BASED ON CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE RELEVANT FACTORS OF THE STRATEGIC SITUATION AND IS AIMED AT STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC STABILITY AND ENSURING EQUAL SECURITY OF THE SIDES.

AS FOR THE QUESTION OF FURTHER MEASURES TO REDUCE STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, WHICH, AS AGREED BY THE SIDES IN ARTICLE XIV OF THE DRAFT TREATY, WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS, ITS RESOLUTION ON A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE BASIS WILL REQUIRE APPROPRIATE ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ALL THE FACTORS DETERMINING THE STRATEGIC SITUATION.

ONLY UNDER SUCH AN APPROACH WILL REDUCTIONS OF

STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS NOT LEAD TO UPSETTING STRATEGIC STABILITY OR RESULT IN GAINING ADVANTAGE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE OTHER SIDE.

IN SELECTING A DATE FOR INITIATING REDUCTION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS--JANUARY 1, 1981--THE SOVIET SIDE

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PROCEEDS FROM THE PREMISE THAT THERE IS A DIRECT AND VERY SUBSTANTIAL INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN THE QUESTION OF THE DATE FOR INITIATING THE REDUCTION OF THE 2,400 AGGREGATE LEVEL AND THE RESULTS OF CONSIDERATION BY THE SIDES OF THE ISSUES INCLUDED IN THE PROTOCOL. IT CONSISTS IN THE FACT THAT BY THE END OF 1980 QUESTIONS OF LIMITATION OF THE ARMS CONCERNING WHICH THE SIDES HAVE ASSUMED TEMPORARY OBLIGATIONS, RECORDED IN THE PROTOCOL, MUST BE RESOLVED, AND THIS WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE SPECIFICALLY WHICH STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS MUST ACCOUNT FOR SUCH REDUCTION.

IT IS CLEAR THAT RELEVANT UNDERSTANDINGS IN THIS CONNECTION, WHICH WILL BE WORKED OUT BY THE SIDES IN THE COURSE OF SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS, WILL HAVE A DIRECT INFLUENCE ON DETERMINING THE STRUCTURE OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS AND, CONSEQUENTLY, ON THE DECISION AS TO PRECISELY WHICH STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS WILL ACCOUNT FOR THE REDUCTION TO THE 2,250 LEVEL PROVIDED FOR IN ARTICLE III, PAR. 2, OF THE DRAFT TREATY.

WITH RESPECT TO THE TIME PERIOD PROPOSED BY THE SOVIET SIDE FOR ACCOMPLISHING REDUCTION OF THE 2,400

AGGREGATE LEVEL BY 150--NOT LATER THAN EIGHTEEN MONTHS FROM
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JANUARY 1, 1981--I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS AGAIN THAT THIS PROPOSAL IS BASED ON THE ACTUAL FEASIBILITY OF COMPLYING WITH THE OBLIGATIONS ASSUMED IN THIS CONNECTION, AND PRECLUDES THE POSSIBILITY OF ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS OR AMBIGUITIES IN THE COURSE OF COMPLYING WITH THEM.

THIS IS PRECISELY THE MINIMUM PERIOD OF TIME NECESSARY FOR DISMANTLING A LARGE NUMBER OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS WHICH ARE SUBJECT TO REDUCTION DURING THE AFOREMENTIONED PERIOD.

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT IF THE OBLIGATIONS TO REDUCE STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS HAD THE SAME PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE U.S. SIDE AS THEY DO FOR THE USSR, THE PROPOSAL FOR A SIX-MONTH PERIOD FOR DISMANTLING OR DESTRUCTION WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ADVANCED HERE.

AS YOU KNOW, THE SOVIET SIDE HAS STATED THAT IF THE TREATY IS CONCLUDED IT INTENDS TO DEACTIVATE MYASISHCHEV-TYPE HEAVY BOMBERS. THUS, IN THIS EVENT HEAVY BOMBERS WOULD CONSTITUTE THE MAIN PORTION OF THE STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS TO BE REDUCED IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE OVERALL 2,400 LEVEL, AND HERE THE PERIODS FOR DISMANTLING OR DESTRUCTION WOULD BE SHORTER. WHEREAS THE PICTURE WOULD BE QUITE DIFFERENT IF THE BULK OF THE ARMS BEING REDUCED CONSISTED OF ICBM LAUNCHERS, AND ESPECIALLY SLBM LAUNCHERS.

IT IS ALSO NECESSARY TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THAT THE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS IN CORRESPONDING AREAS OF THE USSR ARE UNFAVORABLE FOR DISMANTLING ACTIVITIES DURING A CERTAIN TIME OF THE YEAR. THUS, FOR EXAMPLE, DISMANTLING OR DESTRUCTION OF SLBM LAUNCHERS CANNOT BE CARRIED OUT YEAR-
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ROUND IN THE USSR DUE TO UNFAVORABLE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS IN THOSE PLACES WHERE SUCH WORK CAN BE CARRIED OUT.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE EXPERIENCE OF IMPLEMENTING THE INTERIM AGREEMENT OF 1972 AND THE NEED TO COMPLY WITH RELEVANT PROCEDURES, IN PRACTICE DURING A SIX-MONTH PERIOD, AND ON A FULL WORK SCHEDULE, ON THE AVERAGE ONLY 50 STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS CAN BE DISMANTLED IF THIS

INVOLVES ICBM LAUNCHERS AND SLBM LAUNCHERS, FOR EXAMPLE.
THIS IS PRECISELY WHAT IS EMBODIED IN THE SOVIET PROPOSAL
TO THE EFFECT THAT DISMANTLING OR DESTRUCTION OF THE 150
STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS SUBJECT TO REDUCTION MUST BE
COMPLETED NO LATER THAN 18 MONTHS FROM THE AFOREMENTIONED
DATE.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CONSIDERATIONS EXPRESSED
HERE, THE USSR DELEGATION EXPLAINED THAT DISMANTLING OR
DESTRUCTION ACTIVITIES WOULD BE CARRIED OUT CONSECUTIVELY
AND AT AN EVEN PACE OVER THE ENTIRE 18-MONTH PERIOD,
GOVERNED BY THE ACTUAL CONDITIONS AND WITH AN ACCOUNT FOR
EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES.

- II

AS YOU KNOW, UNDER ARTICLE V OF THE DRAFT TREATY IT
HAS BEEN AGREED TO ESTABLISH AN AGGREGATE NUMBER OF 1320,
WHICH ALSO INCLUDES, ALONG WITH LAUNCHERS OF ICBMS AND
SLBMS EQUIPPED WITH MIRVS, HEAVY BOMBERS EQUIPPED FOR
CRUISE MISSILES WITH A RANGE IN EXCESS OF 600 KILOMETERS.
IN THIS SAME ARTICLE THE SIDES HAVE AGREED ON A MAXIMUM
LEVEL OF 820 FOR THE NUMBER OF LAUNCHERS OF ICBMS EQUIPPED

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WITH MIRVS.

THE SOVIET PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH IN ARTICLE V OF THE
DRAFT TREATY A LIMIT ON LAUNCHERS OF ICBMS AND SLBMS

EQUIPPED WITH MIRVS OF AN AGGREGATE NUMBER NOT TO EXCEED
1,250 IS WHOLLY CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY
AND EQUAL SECURITY.

- III

MR. AMBASSADOR,

THE USSR DELEGATION REAFFIRMS THE SOVIET PROPOSALS
TABLED CONCERNING THE MAGNITUDE OF THE RELEVANT AGGREGATE
LEVELS TO BE ESTABLISHED FOR STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS,
AND CONCERNING THE TIMING FOR DISMANTLING OR DESTRUCTION
OF THE STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS SUBJECT TO REDUCTION IN
ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE III, PAR. 2, OF THE DRAFT TREATY.

I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE ESPECIALLY THAT THE SOVIET
SIDE'S APPROACH, BY PROVIDING FOR ADOPTION OF EFFECTIVE
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LIMITATIONS IN THE AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION, ENSURES THE
BALANCE OF INTERESTS OF THE SIDES AND IS FULLY CONSISTENT
WITH THE OVERALL TASK OF STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC STABILITY
AND PRECLUDING UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE. EARLE

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